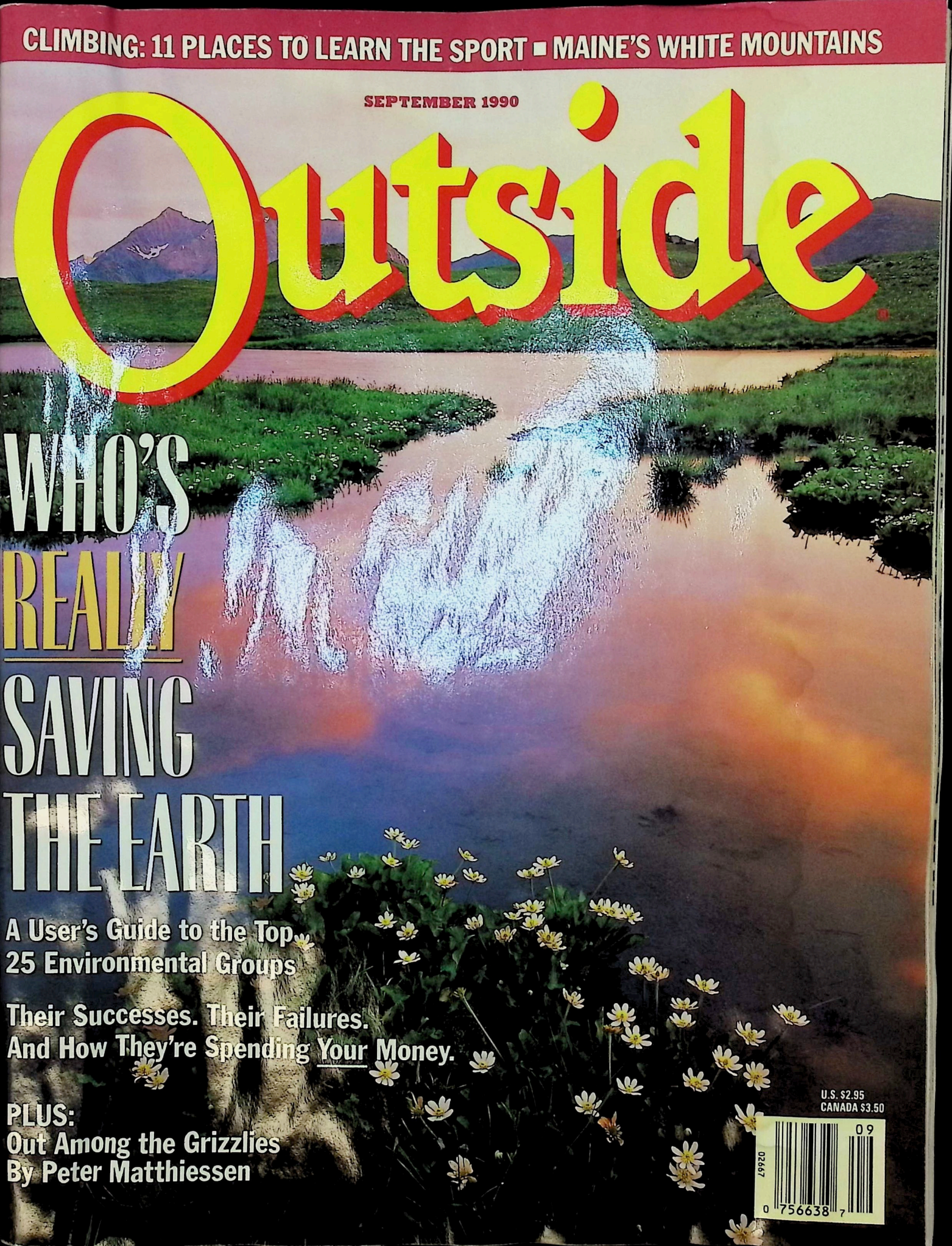
CLIMBING: 11 PLACES TO LEARN THE SPORT ■ MAINE'S WHITE MOUNTAINS

SEPTEMBER 1990

Outside



WHO'S REALLY SAVING THE EARTH

A User's Guide to the Top 25 Environmental Groups

Their Successes. Their Failures. And How They're Spending Your Money.

PLUS:
Out Among the Grizzlies
By Peter Matthiessen

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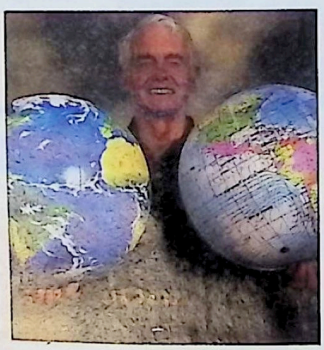
INSIDE THE ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

The huggable donation-magnet

MICHAEL GORGE/BRUCE COLEMAN

WHO THEY ARE. WHAT THEY DO. HOW WELL THEY DO IT. A CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO GREEN GIVING.



Brower, the grand old guru

GALEN ROWELL/MOUNTAIN LIGHT

Saving the earth has never seemed so important, or so confusing. Not only do we have to deal with holes in our ozone layer, toxic seepage in our homes, vanishing lemurs in our burning rainforests, and too damn many copies of *999 Simple Things You Can Do to Embrace the Planet,* we've also got to hack our way through a jungle of environmental organizations that's thick and getting thicker. There are wildlife groups and rainforest groups and toxic-waste groups; grass-roots groups and regional groups and global groups; legal groups and lobbying groups and direct-action groups. All of them want to rescue the world. And in case you haven't noticed the small mountain of mail you've been receiving lately, all of them want your money. But the truth is, most of us don't know diddly about the key concerns, the inner workings, the political biases, the character of leadership, and the overall efficiencies of even the most popular environmental groups.

The fashionable battle

ABRIL/GAMMA-LIAISON

This lack of knowledge wouldn't matter much, if only. If only there weren't quite so many groups, and if only they weren't so susceptible to the usual foibles of business and human nature. If only some of the larger groups didn't have vast bureaucracies, publicity machines, and presidents like the National Wildlife Federation's Jay Hair, who is accustomed to being squired about by chauffeur. If only some

BY BILL GIFFORD AND THE EDITORS

of the smaller groups, like the Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Wastes and the National Toxics Campaign, weren't embroiled in petty feuds over lucrative PR. And if only the current attitude toward money didn't largely reflect that of Thomas Exton, a fund-raiser for the Audubon Society, who's been known to say, "When they say the money's tainted, I say, 'taint enough."

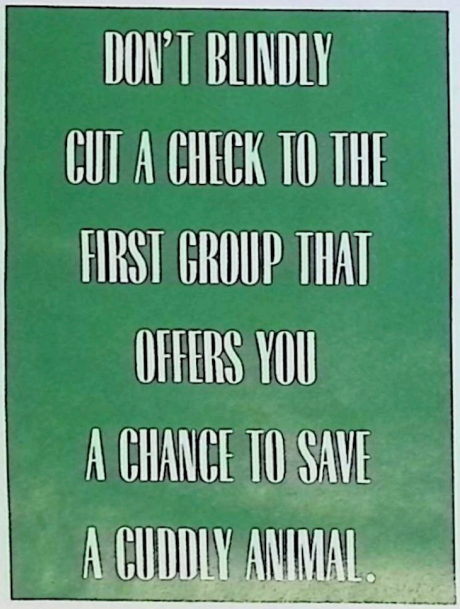
We say 'taint right to blindly cut a check to the first group that offers you a chance to save your favorite cuddly animal. Better to really know what you're committing your money and your energies to. Better to really make a difference. Better to bone up over the next 11 pages with our user's guide to the top 25 environmental groups and our honor roll of eight of the finest grass-roots efforts. The idea is to make us all a little less accepting, a little more informed.

But first a few insights into the categories within the guide itself.

Profile: Who they are and what issues they most heartily embrace. Where they stand politically and where they fall in the ecosystem of groups. For example, lawyers from the Environmental Defense Fund may draft a bill, lobbyists from the Sierra Club may help push it past Capitol Hill, and a popularizer like Greenpeace may land the issue on the evening news. You'll find some surprises here, considering that *most* groups like to keep their public faces *simple* and appealing, pandas and dolphins being infinitely more sellable than CFCs and policy minutiae.

Those who are interested in highly political groups should know that not all of your donation will be spent battling Congress or electing eco-candidates. Federal law restricts the amount of money a tax-deductible group can spend on directly influencing political activity (i.e., lobbying, recruiting voters) to one-fifth of its budget or $1 million, whichever comes first. So take a close look at the nonpolitical programs such groups offer. Some have good ones, while others spend vast portions of their budgets on wildlife coffee mugs and other trinkets. Of the 25 groups listed, only the Sierra Club, Environmental Action, and Friends of the Earth have shaken off their political fetters and become non-tax-deductible. They might not be as attractive to donors, but they can do what they want with their money.

Who's in charge: Most top dogs these days are career administrator-types, and many of them devote their energies primarily to fund-raising. Larger groups, such as Ducks Unlimited, usually have powerful boards that control the purse strings and make major policy decisions. Others, like the Sierra Club, have an active member-democracy; still others, like the Wilderness Society, have two or three top administrators who set the tone. One rule holds true: The smaller the group, the larger the role played by the leader. A less-obvious rule: All but three are white males.



Typical member: Easy-to-identify characteristics to assist in field sightings.

What they've done lately: "Lately," of course, can mean in the last decade or last month, depending on whether you're talking about a giant like the Sierra Club, which might lobby for years on an issue, or the tiny Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Wastes, whose SWAT team of community organizers might close down three dumps in the space of a week. Which is to say, if they're not moving fast, they'd better be working on some earthshaking stuff.

Where the money goes: According to their federal tax returns, these groups spend between 65 and 85 cents out of your dollar on programs; the remainder is plowed back into overhead. But you have to consider what a group terms a program. To some it means funding Kenya's anti-poaching efforts; to others it means sponsoring local nature walks. If you're *really* interested, write your group, ask for a copy of IRS Form 990, and check out the itemized expenses on page two.

Financial picture: Though donations on the whole have skyrocketed in the last few years, most have gone into the pockets of mainline groups. Most big groups, thanks to stocks, bonds, and endowments, are doing fine, though several came very close to overreaching themselves a few years back. Smaller groups have to rely more on grants and loyal constituencies.

What they don't tell you: The downside. Most of the skeletons in environmentalists' closets have to do with money—whether the vague exaggerations about how much is spent on political contributions (the League of Conservation Voters) or last year's $400,000 worth of unmentioned oil and gas revenues (Audubon). Of course, there's also a wide assortment of feuds, political compromises, and illicit corporate alliances.

Mascot: The celebrity who has most effectively and blatantly positioned himself or herself with a given group, or vice versa.

Milquetoast/Bombthrower Index: Our completely subjective measure of how the group deals with—dare we say it?—the establishment (i.e., Congress, the courts, and big business). Don't assume that a higher number means a more effective group. Many lasting environmental successes have been achieved by groups that operate in the middle ground.

We'd give them: We began with a hypothetical $500 and divided it up. If all groups were created equal, we would have given each $20. They aren't, so we didn't: Some groups got $35, others zip. But that's not to say we don't need all of them. Even David Brower, the most spirited and opinionated environmentalist around, divvies up his donations among every group from Earth First! to the Nature Conservancy. "We need that diversity," he told us. "We need to keep a lot of different heads above water." After a pause, he added, "Even if some of them have been temporarily hypnotized."

Bill Gifford has covered the environmental front for the Village Voice *and* Legal Times, *at which he is currently a reporter.*

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

Founded: 1987. Members: 55,000 (15th overall). Staff: 65. Budget: $4.6 million (13th overall). Annual membership: $15. 1015 18th St. NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20036; 202-429-5660.

PROFILE: A thoroughly modern rainforest-preservation group that broke away from the Nature Conservancy in 1987 over, as one staffer puts it, "whether you can run programs in other countries from Washington, DC, by people who have never been outside the U.S. except to lie on a beach in Cancun." Unlike the Nature Conservancy, Conservation International takes a flexible, sustainable-use approach, permitting logging and other activities that infuriate rainforest purists. But the purists should note that CI pioneered debt-for-nature swaps, a revolutionary method of buying and reducing tropical countries' national debt in return for sustainable rainforest management. Other groups have followed CI's lead in Ecuador, Costa Rica, the Philippines, and Madagascar. But unlike World Wildlife Fund and the Nature Conservancy, CI designs projects that economically benefit local people. More than half of the staffers are foreign nationals.

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Primatologist and Gap pitchman Russell Mittermeier, 40, brought in from the World Wildlife Fund in 1989; unlike most higher-ups, he still works as a field scientist. (Salary, $85,000.)

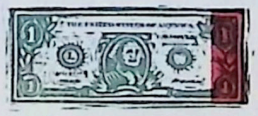
Mittermeier

TYPICAL MEMBER: Vacations in tropical countries; guiltily gave away his or her pet parrot before Earth Day.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Since 1987, CI has been building a membership base (and doing less conservation work than some would like); is currently testing debt-for-nature waters with Guatemala and Mexico; organized the Don't Bungle the Jungle celeb-o-rama in 1989.

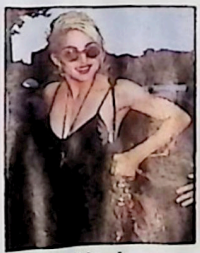
WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

programs 85%



overhead 15%

FINANCIAL PICTURE: Though its costly membership drive is still in the booster stage, CI should be rolling in cash next year, when its budget doubles. For now, foundations and corporations provide more than three-fourths of its funds.



The blond one

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: Ballyhooed Beni Biosphere Reserve, created by CI in a debt-for-nature deal with Bolivia, is turning out to be a classic example of how not to deal with developing countries. After the region's laid-off workers took their chain saws to the reserve, CI boldly asked Bolivia to cough up $250,000 of its own money—equal to 40 percent of the country's entire national-parks budget—to manage the region.

MASCOTS: Madonna, Sandra Bernhard.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 3
Moderately worked up

WE'D GIVE THEM: $30

DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE

Founded: 1947. Members: 80,000 (14th overall). Staff: 34. Budget: $4.6 million (12th overall). Annual membership: $25. 1244 19th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036; 202-659-9510.

PROFILE: A group of old-fashioned Rocky Mountain types who like animals with teeth, not just the ones with cute cuddly faces. Of all the wildlife groups, Defenders of Wildlife has stayed closest to its original purpose: to protect species and habitat. It remains lean and focused, attracting former members of Audubon and the National Wildlife Federation who are turned off by their groups' nouveau globalism. Though it maintains a much lower profile than in the 1970s, Defenders is still strong in the West, where its advocacy of wolf reintroduction is teaching it to make friends with livestock owners. Other pet projects include restoring the Everglades and establishing wildlife corridors so animals can migrate without meeting roads or fences. Internal conflicts persist over whether to expand into bigger issues, but for now at least the group seems content.

They like their animals big and mean.

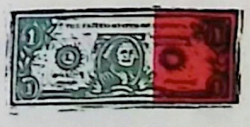
WHO'S IN CHARGE: M. Rupert Cutler, 57, an Audubon veteran and old-timer on wildlife issues, is president, at least for the moment. Board members, divided over the expansion question, have forced out three presidents in the 1980s alone. (Salary, $90,950.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: A bearded, middle-aged man who likes following game trails through the underbrush, wearing knobby Vibrams and no underwear.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Set up a $100,000 fund to pay western ranchers for livestock killed by wolves; hired a lawyer to help seek a ban on international trade in wildlife (except for those used for captive breeding).

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

programs 66%



overhead 34%

FINANCIAL PICTURE: Unlike most of its wildlife-loving comrades, Defenders has kept its budget and membership fairly stable. They won't become the Donald Trump of the environmental movement. Loyal members kick in the largest share.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: The staff of wildlife specialists has a reputation as prima donnas, believing that the president should concentrate on fund-raising, not policy.

MASCOT: Don Henley.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 3
Moderately worked up

WE'D GIVE THEM: $30

MIKE SPILOTRO/STAR FILE

DUCKS UNLIMITED

Founded: 1937. Members: 550,000 (seventh overall). Staff: 150. Budget: $67.4 million (third overall). Annual membership: $20. One Waterfowl Way, Long Grove, IL 60047; 708-438-4300.

PROFILE: Conservative, middle-American, hunter-dominated Ducks Unlimited has found itself at the front of the pack on the suddenly fashionable issue of wetlands, which DU has been preserving and rebuilding since everyone else was calling them swamps. Their goal: more ducks (to shoot, of course). Their methods: mostly straightforward. DU works primarily on government lands, hiring contractors to build dikes and reflood drained wetlands, convincing farmers not to plow up water- and duck-holding prairie depressions, and insisting on hunters' access, which angers many other environmental groups. The group doesn't get too political, however, and it will cave in to development interests quicker than most. With its affiliates in Mexico and Canada, DU covers all North American waterfowl territory, but most of its activity over the years has been in Canada. Although DU is primarily a man's group, it thoughtfully suggests ways for womenfolk to keep busy during the season, like duck-needlepoint parties.

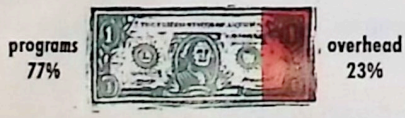
Saving wetlands, shooting birds

WHO'S IN CHARGE: The bureaucracy, really. Presidents are elected for ceremonial one-year terms by a tight inner circle of top officers and trustees, which includes brewing scion Peter H. Coors. The president of the day is John Walker, 48, who has been with Ducks Unlimited since 1966. (No salary.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Likes George Strait, hates being called an environmentalist.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Protected more than 213,000 acres of wetlands since 1984; formed an alliance with the Nature Conservancy to restore a key migration route in California's Central Valley; opened a Washington, DC, office to help develop federal waterfowl management plans.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:



FINANCIAL PICTURE: When the Jaycees, Elks, Rotarians and Shriners are off, DU holds cash-raising chicken-and-coleslaw fests. Gun companies and Fortune 500 types kick in more than their share.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: DU stridently opposed efforts to ban lead shot, a major cause of bird poisoning.

MASCOT: Browning Firearms Inc. (introduced special Ducks Unlimited edition shotgun last year).

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 1
Milquetoasts

WE'D GIVE THEM: $20

EARTH FIRST!

Founded: 1980. Members: 15,000 (estimated) (23rd overall). Staff: four on *EF! Journal*, all others volunteer. Budget: $150,000 (*EF! Journal*); $62,084.21 (EF! Foundation) (25th overall). Annual subscription to *EF! Journal*: $20. Box 5871, Tucson, AZ 85703; 602-622-1371.

PROFILE: A self-proclaimed "disorganization" best known for filling bulldozer gas-tanks with high-test sand, dressing up in bear suits, and getting infiltrated by the FBI, Earth First! has no official membership, no dues, and a guiding philosophy that says humanity and its structures are a cancer requiring radical surgery. Members are mostly tough-talking westerners and mostly sixties-protest veterans. Other environmental groups generally like EF! since it makes their positions appear moderate. But EF! is at a crux: Its founder is charged with conspiracy, two of its leaders were injured by a car bomb of mysterious origin, and its membership is swollen with gung-ho Abbey-come-latelys whose ideas of monkeywrenching (such as holding a Puke-In at a Bellingham, Washington, shopping mall) put them at odds with the core leadership. For Earth First! the big question is whether a group can be big, anarchic, and effective all at the same time.

How many rednecks is too many?

DAVID J. CROSS

Foreman

ALLEN GREEN

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Founder Dave Foreman, 43, former Washington lobbyist for the Wilderness Society, has laid low since last year's bust, leaving much of the organizing, er, disorganizing, to cofounder Mike Roselle. Meal money comes mostly from speaking engagements. (No salaries.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Looks like a beery redneck. Or at least tries to.

TERRENCE MOORE

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Been busted by the FBI while allegedly attempting to cut down a power-line tower; renounced tree-spiking as dangerous to human life; organized Redwood Summer, a series of logging protests.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

FINANCIAL PICTURE: Hmmm. *Earth First! Journal* subscriptions support four full-timers. The EF! Foundation doles out cash for the $1,000 "Edward Abbey Deep Ecology Award" and more nebulous purposes like "Central Appalachian Rendezvous" and "Ancient Forest Rescue Expedition." Beyond that, who knows. Ask the FBI.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: Dave Foreman has suggested that EF! is too large and should perhaps be dissolved.

MASCOT: The late Edward Abbey.

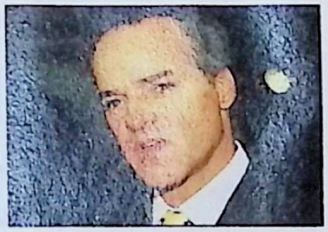
MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 5
Bombthrowers

WE'D GIVE THEM: $15

ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE FUND

Founded: 1967. Members: 150,000 (tenth overall).
Staff: 109. Budget: $12.9 million (tenth overall). Annual membership: $20.
257 Park Ave. S, New York, NY 10010; 212-505-2100.

PROFILE: Once a cadre of hard-nosed liberal litigators with the unofficial motto "Sue the bastards," Environmental Defense Fund has broken ranks with fellow legal eagles Natural Resources Defense Council and Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund by casting its lot with "free market" environmentalism. The idea—which has been kicking around since the seventies—is to curb pollution by harnessing market forces rather than harnessing business with micro-regulation. Besides being included in Bush's Clean Air Bill, free-market environmentalism has won EDF an audience with Margaret Thatcher and praise from many large corporations (whose dollars, incidentally, EDF does not accept). The group does, however, cash checks from takeover king Henry Kravis, to whom free-market talk sounds good. Despite its recent outward shift in emphasis, EDF's traditional litigation on energy issues, recycling, Antarctica, and ocean dumping is still going strong. Though the organization is widely considered a close cousin to the NRDC, EDF is more involved with wildlife and is generally considered to be more flexible.



Henry Kravis, unlikely crusader

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Executive Director Frederic Krupp, 36, a horn-rimmed pioneer of "third wave" environmentalism who spends half his time fund-raising. (Salary, $125,000.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Lawyer with a green conscience and a red Miata.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Helped draw up the Bush administration's plan to cut acid rain; proposed World Bank lending reforms that bank President Barber Conable adopted in 1989.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

FINANCIAL PICTURE: Manhattan society's favorite green group, EDF taps the wallets of such luminaries as Felix Rohatyn and Leonard Bernstein, who with other members provide a healthy two-thirds. EDF also gets a little from government contracts. Revenues have increased 50 percent over the last two years.

Free-Marketeer-in-Chief

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: After the group's researchers concluded that incinerator ash was itself a toxic waste, EDF lobbyists supported bills classifying the ash as merely a "special" waste, subject to less-strict regulation.

MASCOT: George Bush.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 3
Moderately worked up

WE'D GIVE THEM: $20

GREENPEACE USA

Founded: 1971. Members: 2.3 million (first overall).
Staff: 175. Budget: $50.2 million (fourth overall). Annual membership: $20.
1436 U St. NW, Washington, DC 20009; 202-462-1177.

PROFILE: Onetime shock troops who now more closely resemble a division of a vast multinational public relations firm. Greenpeace's high-profile stunts (many of which are performed by Greenpeace International, a separate umbrella group) put environmental offenses on the evening news. Now that whales have mostly been saved, the group also wants to get nuclear weapons off boats and to ban CFCs and toxics. But despite a budget that doubles every two or three years, the giant seems uncertain how to use its clout. And despite a generally on-the-ball research staff, Greenpeace purposely steers clear of policy debates, preferring to preserve its hellraising, pirate image. Greenpeace has been moving into the grass roots lately, where its publicity-grabbing actions are alternately appreciated and resented. Though its membership has doubled in the last two years, thanks to prodigious mailings (12 percent of the group's budget goes for stamps) and a small army of young canvassers, being a Greenpeacer doesn't mean much more than signing a check. You won't be asked to vote, and they won't say thank you.

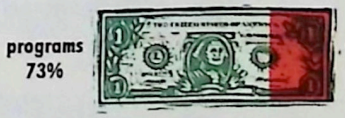
Have the pirates gotten flabby?

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Executive Director Peter Bahouth, 37, probably the only environmental leader in Washington who goes to demonstrations, gets rolled by cops (as happened in New Jersey the weekend before Earth Day), and is proud of it. (Salary, $33,719.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Has lasting regrets about not skipping class to attend antiwar rallies.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Stopped a Trident submarine missile test off Florida last summer (a few months later, Navy destroyers rammed the Greenpeace ship); opened office in East Germany.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:



FINANCIAL PICTURE: From its two million members, Greenpeace takes in about $40 million a year. It also hangs on to about a million bucks' worth of blue-chip stock (to get into shareholder meetings). Greenpeace USA is the cash cow for the group's international operation, to which it funnels a sixth of its money.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: Greenpeace squelched an attempt by its poorly paid canvassers and phone fund-raisers to organize.

MASCOT: Pee Wee Herman.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 4
Hardliners

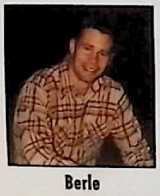
WE'D GIVE THEM: $15

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Founded: 1905. Members: 600,000 (fifth overall). Staff: 335.
Budget: $35 million (seventh overall). Annual membership: $20.
950 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022; 212-832-3200.

Birdwatchers-turned-broadcasters

PROFILE: Big, moderate, and, like its namesake painter, concerned with aesthetics. Founded by women outraged at the slaughter of birds for hat plumes, Audubon for a long time stuck to straight wildlife management. But DDT opened the birdwatchers' eyes to pollution, and under Russell Peterson in the seventies and eighties Audubon weighed in on bigger issues like global warming, clean air, and even nuclear war (though it has remained more moderate than the Sierra Club). Unfortunately, Peterson stretched Audubon's finances to the point where it was secretly considering selling off wildlife refuges. Instead, the organization cleaned house, firing many of its old-time wildlife biologists, expanding its fund-raising and membership efforts, and hiring the environmental movement's first full-time corporate fund-raising specialist. It worked—but the Audubon that emerged is more ecotainment mogul than wildlife preservationist, producing gorgeous TV specials that occasionally enrage their corporate sponsors.



Berle

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Peter A. A. Berle, 52, former New York State environmental commissioner and jogging fanatic. But insiders say the board holds the strings, even on less-than-major questions, slowing the pace of decision-making to a crawl. (Salary, $140,000.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Feels a twinge of guilt whenever she dresses the Christmas turkey.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Completed a new environmental film, *The Last Elephant*, to be aired this fall by Turner Broadcasting System; acquired 7,000 acres of new sanctuary land in 1989.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

FINANCIAL PICTURE: Somebody there may like to play the market, but they ought to stick to birdwatching. On more than $40 million in securities trades, Audubon made about a million and a half in 1989. Chapter members keep the place going, but Audubon's aggressive dollar-hunters did convince General Electric to put up $1 million a year for TV shows.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: Of all the groups lined up against drilling in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Audubon is the only one that permits oil and gas exploration on its own properties. Last year's haul on Louisiana mineral rights totaled more than $400,000.

MASCOT: Ted Turner.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 2
Compromisers

WE'D GIVE THEM: $10

NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

Founded: 1936. Members: 975,000 (second overall). Staff: 860.
Budget: $87.2 million (second overall). Annual membership: $15.
1400 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036; 202-797-6800.

The lucrative ranger

PROFILE: Huge, rich, and the only group this side of Ducks Unlimited that competes for membership with the NRA. It took James Watt to make this longtime blue-collar, hook-and-bullet group break with its conservative, politically reticent past. Now that it has, National Wildlife Federation moves from issue to issue—and boardroom to boardroom—like the proverbial 800-pound gorilla. Quite cozy with industry, NWF virtually invented the corporate enviro-seminar, brought to its highest form in the oxymoronic Corporate Conservation Council (membership fee, $10,000), which includes the likes of Monsanto and Du Pont. CEO Jay Hair also engages in populist business-bashing, annoying both corporate leaders, who consider him a colleague, and environmentalists, who don't take him seriously. But mostly, NWF is in the business of grooming young nature lovers with *Ranger Rick* magazine and selling "nature education materials," such as terra-cotta bunnies.

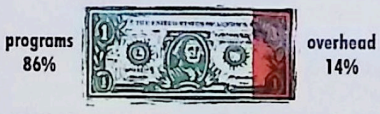
Hair

WHO'S IN CHARGE: CEO Jay Hair, 44, a former biology professor who now tools around in a chauffeured Olds, is NWF's point man and spokesman, and his abrasiveness is legend. ("He specializes in nasty letters," says a recipient from another major group.) Hair is especially peeved about being passed over for EPA chief. (Salary, $200,000.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Received most of his outdoors knowledge watching "Grizzly Adams."

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Won a timely legal victory on damage assessment of oil spills; bulldozed former three-story headquarters—and the butterfly-inhabited trees and shrubs surrounding the old building—to build a new $30 million Taj Mahal.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:



FINANCIAL PICTURE: The barnyard full of cash cows starts with a $27 million merchandise operation, complete with its own giant warehouse full of duck mugs in the Washington suburbs. *Ranger Rick* and *Your Big Backyard* generate $12 million a year. NWF has an endowment bigger than any other group's except the Nature Conservancy's.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: NWF sold Claude Moore's northern Virginia farm to developers in 1986 after the 86-year-old had donated it for a nature preserve.

MASCOTS: The Muppets.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 1
Milquetoasts

WE'D GIVE THEM: $0

ERWIN & PEGGY BAUER/BRUCE COLEMAN

S. ORISTAGLIO NAJLAH FEANNY/BLACK STAR

NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

Founded: 1970. Members: 168,000 (ninth overall).
Staff: 140. Budget: $16 million (ninth overall). Annual membership: $10.
40 W. 20th St., New York, NY 10011; 212-727-2700.

PROFILE: A team of crack scientists and lawyers that functions as an ad hoc EPA. Founded by Yale Law School classmates, the Natural Resources Defense Council litigates and lobbies on the big issues (energy policy, air and water pollution, global warming), but its Washington wisdom and strong public-health orientation make it more hardline than other legal players. Their methods work well behind closed doors on Capitol Hill but don't grab headlines—hence last year's very, very earnest PR battle against alar, in which NRDC enlisted Meryl Streep and "60 Minutes." The only major group with a program in New York City, NRDC is breaking ground on larger issues like public health and urban decay. In recent years it has also taken on nuclear weapons policy, establishing a friendship with the Soviet Academy of Sciences that led to the first superpower test-ban monitoring arrangement. Staffers work late in the group's energy-efficient Manhattan headquarters, but respectable salaries keep them on board (senior attorneys run $80,000). Still, technocracy does have its limitations, as shown by NRDC's definition of solid waste management, which includes incineration.

NRDC's greatest hit

STEVE LEONARD/BLACK STAR

WHO'S IN CHARGE: The group's first and only executive director, John Adams, 53, a former assistant U.S. attorney who came on in 1970, along with a core group of Ivy League law graduates that constitutes one of the most stable leaderships of any environmental group. (Salary, $120,000.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Andover '63, Yale '67, Harvard Law '70. Pentagon antiwar marches '68, '69, '70.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Helped Idaho activists stop a plutonium processing plant; issued report that turned public opinion against drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge even before the *Exxon Valdez*.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

FINANCIAL PICTURE: About half member-funded, with a handful of corporate and foundation donors chipping in the rest. Caveat donor: NRDC's complex bundle of "restricted funds" means that unmarked donations may disappear into overhead.

Alar's worst enemy

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: NRDC promised, along with Friends of the Earth and Environmental Defense Fund, not to criticize McDonald's Styrofoam packaging because it used nice, clean, "reformulated" CFCs, which are in fact no different from the bad old CFCs.

PAUL F. GERO/SYGMA

MASCOT: Meryl Streep.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 4
Hardliners

WE'D GIVE THEM: $25

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Founded: 1951. Members: 600,000 (fourth overall).
Staff: 1,000 (including seasonal employees). Budget: $156.1 million (first overall). Annual membership: $15. 1815 N. Lynn St., Arlington, VA 22209; 703-841-5300.

PROFILE: The pin-striped real estate broker of the environmental movement, the Nature Conservancy aspires to save the world by buying land. This odd association of MBAs, lawyers, and environmentalists owns and manages more than 1,600 private nature preserves nationwide, from postage-stamp suburban specks to a 500-square-mile chunk of New Mexico. Though it's been around for a few decades, the Conservancy came into its own after Reagan and Watt monkeywrenched public-lands programs, and it has since made the government its best customer, to the tune of $88 million in sales and leases in 1989. Critics say the Conservancy sells indulgences—or, more accurately, accepts huge corporate donations—so big companies such as Exxon and Alcoa can get to public relations heaven. Others say the group makes the best of a dirty world. Regardless, the Conservancy is the richest group by far. Its assets total $600 million, and it also owns about $67 million worth of donated "trade lands," or plain old real estate, which it often sells to developers to pay the bills. For more dish, check out *Good Dirt: Confessions of a Conservationist*, by David E. Mosine, former vice-president of land acquisition (Globe Pequot, $19.95).

WHO'S IN CHARGE: President John Sawhill, 52, former president of New York University and deputy secretary of energy under Nixon. But the real work is done by the preserve managers, who are usually gung-ho field biologists, and by the 50 state offices. (Salary, $185,000.)

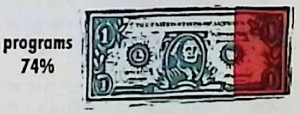
TYPICAL MEMBER: Thinks some environmental groups are socialist front organizations.

Gray Ranch: paradise bought

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Paid a Mexican billionaire $18 million for ecologically unique, 500-square-mile Gray Ranch in New Mexico last January, after the Wilderness Society and Sierra Club failed to get the government to buy it.

DAVID MUENCH

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:



FINANCIAL PICTURE: With a 30-member $100,000 club on top of a huge endowment, the Conservancy is in cash-flow heaven; what most people don't know is that more than half of its income comes from holding land for and selling land to the government. But holding real estate can be expensive. Last year's sales to the government lost the Conservancy $8 million.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: Conservancy staffers, while conducting a federally sponsored study of natural landmarks, routinely trespassed on private lands, fearing owners would refuse permission if asked.

MASCOT: The Fortune 500.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 1
Milquetoasts

WE'D GIVE THEM: $0 (They won't miss it)

SIERRA CLUB

Founded: 1892. Members: 560,000 (sixth overall). Staff: 290. Budget: $35.2 million (sixth overall). Annual membership: $33. 730 Polk St., San Francisco, CA 94109; 415-776-2211.

PROFILE: The most radical and political of the mainline groups, Sierra Club's traditional wilderness focus has broadened to include every green issue except pesticides, thanks largely to the club's on-again, off-again relationship with former executive director and current board member David Brower, which keeps the Club strident, and its loss of tax-exempt status, which keeps it out of thrall to big donors seeking shelter. But at the same time, long political experience has taught these guys to compromise when necessary, irking more militant sorts like Brower. The Club's heavy Washington lobbying presence is backed up by a $280,000 PAC. Outside of Washington, a vast grass-roots structure votes on Club policies, lobbies on state and local levels, organizes nature outings, and gobbles up cash at a rate that, according to some, keeps the Club from achieving depth on any but the most major issues. If that's true, it's not necessarily a bad trade-off: In many locales, especially on the West Coast, the leading local environmental group is a Sierra Club chapter. The Club is growing fast: Budget has doubled, membership tripled since 1980.

Fischer

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Executive Director Michael Fischer, 50, sits atop a vast hierarchy of regional, state, and local chapters. An unpretentious Marin County sort, Fischer may be the only head of a major environmental group who drives a clunker Citation. Not that he couldn't afford better. (Salary, $86,000.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Wine-and-cheesy western Democrat.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Led the fight against the nomination of Watt protégé James Cason to a key Agriculture Department post; maneuvered green candidates into Nevada congressional seats; worked as lead floor lobbyists on new Clean Air Act.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

FINANCIAL PICTURE: Sierra's got a solid million in the bank, but it couldn't wait for a capital gains cut and so had to sell more than $4 million in investments last year.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: Sierra Club California recently teamed up with developers to defeat a wind farm planned for a mountaintop near Gorman, California, because the facility would have been unaesthetic. The Club's defense—that the wind farm would destroy condor habitat—doesn't hold much water, since the California condor no longer lives in the wild.

MASCOTS: *thirtysomething*'s Ken Olin and Patricia Wettig.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 3
Moderately worked up

WE'D GIVE THEM: $30

SIERRA CLUB LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

Founded: 1971. Members: 120,000 (11th overall). Staff: 67. Budget: $6.74 million (11th overall). Annual membership: none. 2044 Fillmore St., San Francisco, CA 94115; 415-567-6100.

PROFILE: A group of overworked young attorneys who'll represent anyone from the National Audubon Society to Ecuador's Huaorani Indians and who are quick to remind you that they aren't the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund isn't an advocacy group—it's a law firm offshoot of the Sierra Club that tends to compromise less easily than the Club's political realists and that has donor-attracting tax-exempt status to boot. Smaller than Natural Resources Defense Council or Environmental Defense Fund, the SCLDF carved its niche in the seventies by suing the government to force it to abide by its own environmental laws. More recently, SCLDF has moved into urban development and air pollution, but most of its litigation involves traditional wildlife and public lands issues. Now gearing up for its biggest fight ever, the *Exxon Valdez* suit. Mellow office atmosphere, with dogs and an official cat named George Muir.

The *Exxon Valdez*, next on the docket

MICHELLE BARNES/GAMMA-LIAISON

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Fredric Sutherland, 51, a specialist in public interest law, heads up seven regional offices. But the power rests with the board of prominent lawyers that approves—or disapproves—litigation. (Salary, $132,916.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Same as the Sierra Club's, minus the faith in politics.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Won a $5.5 million judgment against Union Oil Company over refinery pollution of San Francisco Bay in May; spearheaded efforts to stall logging in virgin old-growth northwestern forests by suing to have the northern spotted owl added to the endangered species list.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

FINANCIAL PICTURE: Strong base of supporters keeps money flowing in. And, conveniently, big-time law firms like those represented on the board often work pro bono.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: In its direct mail appeals, SCLDF claims it receives "*no* government money for our work." Well...not exactly. Courts award costs and attorney fees to public-interest law groups who sue the government and win. In 1989, SCLDF won a whopping $1.2 million in fees.

MASCOT: The snail darter.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 4
Hardliners

WE'D GIVE THEM: $35

THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

Founded: 1935. Members: 370,000 (eighth overall). Staff: 140.
Budget: $17.3 million (eighth overall). Annual membership: $15 first year, $30 thereafter. 900 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20006; 202-833-2300.

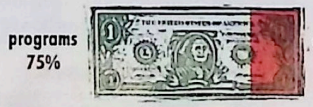
PROFILE: With its staff of Washington-savvy politicos who can influence votes on the black-tie circuit, the Wilderness Society seeks to influence the management of federal lands, period. With no chapters to eat up the budget or tie up policy decisions in democracy, the Society has a depth that the Sierra Club and others can't match, sending its land-planners to obscure Forest Service proceedings and its lobbyists to the big congressional debates. In fact, its devotion to Washington's ways drove Earth First! founder Dave Foreman into the desert. Trouble is, say critics, the group tends to lean heavily on old, outdated statutes, which the Society refuses to consider redrafting. Founded by a Socialist Party member, the Society was for a long time a hard-line backpacker advocacy group. But since 1980, it has gradually become more cerebral and conservative, no doubt to the approval of its growing roster of corporate sponsors and to the chagrin of longtime staffers, some of whom complain that the leadership takes little notice of the little people. Posh office is decorated with 68 Ansel Adams originals, 62 more than the Sierra Club has.

WHO'S IN CHARGE: The triumvirate of Chair Alice Rivlin, 59, President George Frampton, Jr., 46, and Counselor Gaylord Nelson, 74, set policy and attend key beltway parties. Disgruntled ex-staffers, however, say the Society's "millionaire board" calls the shots. (Salaries: Rivlin, none; Frampton, $120,000; Nelson, $85,000.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Summers in Nantucket, votes for Teddy Kennedy at every opportunity.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Lobbied for a 110,000-acre Everglades expansion bill, which was signed by President Bush in December 1989; completed a computer-mapping inventory of old-growth forest which proved that much less forest survived than officials had previously assumed; led other national groups in lobbying for protection of Alaska's Tongass National Forest.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:



FINANCIAL PICTURE: Their decade-long expansion push has brought in money and bodies, but the group may have overstepped itself as Audubon and Friends of the Earth did. The Society, however, lacks the endowment to cover many more years like the last one (see "What They Don't Tell You").

Nelson

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: The 1988–1989 membership drives boosted the ranks by 35 percent, but at a price: The Society ran more than $1 million in the red.

MASCOT: Cheryl Tiegs.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 3
Moderately worked up

WE'D GIVE THEM: $10

WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

Founded: 1961. Members: 940,000 (third overall). Staff: 250.
Budget: $35.5 million (fifth overall). Annual membership: $15.
1250 24th St. NW, Washington, DC 20037; 202-293-4800.

PROFILE: WWF's chubby little panda-bear logo captures the essence of this international group: It likes cute animals with big, round eyes, in places far, far away. Third World tropical forests are World Wildlife Fund's central issue, and though it sponsors more field research than any other group reviewed here, its style tends to be somewhat callous and patronizing, as when it suggests that people in developing countries abandon farming and hunting in endangered species' habitats and instead focus on ecotourism. With England's Prince Philip at the helm of WWF International and ex-president William Reilly at the EPA, WWF is as connected as they come—and is quite friendly with many less-than-pure corporations, including Exxon and Chevron, both of which donated more than $50,000 last year. WWF is now in mid-merger with the Conservation Foundation, a like-minded think-tank, and will soon be known as WWF and Conservation International, not to be confused with plain old Conservation International.

Fuller

WHO'S IN CHARGE: President Kathryn Fuller, 44, fosters a friendly office atmosphere by brown-bagging it with staffers, but in terms of policy, WWF's multilayered bureaucracy has a momentum all its own. As chairman of the WWF and the Conservation Foundation, Nixon-era EPA chief Russell Train, 70, acts as ambassador-at-large to corporate America. (Salaries: Fuller, $188,880; Train, $101,400.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Goes on an annual video safari and keeps birds-of-the-rainforest picture books on the coffee table.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Issued ivory trade study in June 1989 that called for ban on ivory imports, which Bush signed into law four days later; arranged debt-for-nature swaps in Ecuador, Costa Rica, and Madagascar, the first in Africa.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

FINANCIAL PICTURE: Former president Reilly had the Midas touch, turning a $13 million shop in 1985 into a monster three times that size. Last year, WWF took in $4 million more than it spent. In addition to members' contributions, WWF lives off royalties on its $25 million trove of investments, as well as almost $2 million in annual government contracts.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: Until its ivory ban recommendation, WWF fought *against* listing African elephants as endangered, which would have outlawed the ivory trade. Did the group suddenly get enlightened? Or did WWF International board member Anton Rupert, whose native South Africa had been a nexus of the ivory trade, lose some pull?

MASCOT: Hsing-hsing and Ling-ling, the National Zoo pandas.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 2
Compromisers

WE'D GIVE THEM: $5

RUSSELL A. MITTERMEIER

JANET FRIES/COURTESY OF THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

Founded: 1961. Members: 100,000 (12th overall). Staff: 44. Budget: $3.3 million (14th overall). Annual membership: $25. 1717 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Suite 202, Washington, DC 20036; 202-265-8393.

PROFILE: A hands-on group that funnels money from its seven-person Washington, DC, outpost to its real office in Nairobi. There its largely African staff functions as shadow park-managers for East Africa, fixing jeeps and radios, sponsoring university wildlife-management courses, and working closely with controversial Kenyan wildlife director Richard Leakey to persuade Africans that tourism is worth more than ivory. A longtime critic of African governments, AWF supported a ban on ivory trade long before the World Wildlife Fund and President Bush jumped on the bandwagon last year. AWF remains one of the few international groups that lets locals tend their own affairs, offering only advice, equipment, and training.

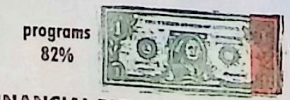
The main attraction

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Executive Officer Paul Schindler, 54, handles the fund-raising, but the field work is in the hands of Mark R. Stanley Price, former associate of Richard Leakey. (Salary, $122,000.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Ex-Peace Corps volunteer who composts the greeting cards sent to him by other environmental groups.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Ran the "Only Elephants Should Wear Ivory" campaign; bought radios and planes for Kenyan park service.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:



FINANCIAL PICTURE: Last year's ad campaigns did more than tell folks not to buy ivory; they also helped double contributions.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: The ivory ban has damaged the economy and elephant population of Zimbabwe, a good environmental citizen overrun by pachyderms.

MASCOT: Jimmy Stewart.

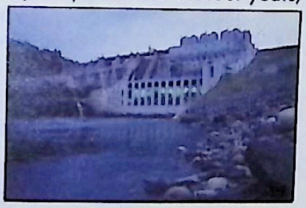
MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 4
Hardliners

WE'D GIVE THEM: $35

AMERICAN RIVERS

Founded: 1973. Members: 14,000 (24th overall). Staff: 20. Budget: $1.5 million (17th overall). Annual membership: $20. 801 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Suite 303, Washington, DC 20003; 202-547-6900.

PROFILE: A single-minded lobbying group that measures success in river miles protected under the federal Wild and Scenic system. Dams are the enemy: American Rivers hopes to breach or to install fish ladders in more than 200 non-federal dams up for relicensing by 1993. AR is willing to accommodate development interests to achieve its ends. The good news: Federal protection is for keeps, unlike the fragile legal judgments sought by groups like the Environmental Defense Fund. The bad news: AR's opposition to hydropower alienates some larger groups that view it as a clean power source. AR's budget has quintupled in the last four years, but there's a lot of work to do: The group says only one-third of one percent of American rivers are permanently protected.



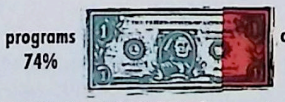
The Kennebec: dam success

WHO'S IN CHARGE: New President Kevin Coyle, 39, a ten-year veteran of the National Park Service. (Salary, $70,000.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Urban river-rat who secretly fantasizes about blowing up Hoover Dam.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Persuaded Maine Governor John McKernan to buy and breach the Kennebec River dam, and Congress to add 40 new Wild and Scenic river segments (now at 122) in 1988.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:



FINANCIAL PICTURE: Grew steadily in the eighties to the million-dollar mark of credibility, with a little help from government grants and more sophisticated fund-raising and publicity.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: AR's newfound wealth comes not from its membership but from large donors (more than $5,000), who accounted for 36 percent of last year's revenues.

MASCOT: Richard Chamberlain.

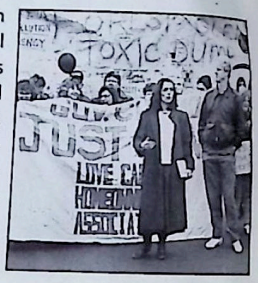
MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 3
Moderately worked up

WE'D GIVE THEM: $15

CITIZENS CLEARINGHOUSE FOR HAZARDOUS WASTES

Founded: 1981. Members: 7,000 (25th overall). Staff: 14. Budget: $693,000 (23rd overall). Annual membership: $20. Box 926, Arlington, VA 22216; 703-276-7070.

PROFILE: Not an environmental group so much as an environmental justice movement, Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Wastes equips small, mostly rural, mostly southern and midwestern groups to fight dumps and incinerators by giving them a crash course in organizing, research, and media relations. Its specialty is translating government-industrial-legalese into English (example: "resource recovery center" means "incinerator"). With a tiny budget and staff, CCHW disdains the legislative debates and litigation that prevail just across the Potomac from its roach-infested Arlington digs. Detractors say the group is captive to parochial interests; CCHW says that's the point.



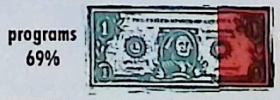
Gibbs and Begley

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Former Love Canal resident Lois Gibbs, 39, who founded CCHW after the national environmental groups ignored her and her neighbors. (Salary, $34,000.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Quit the church choir to organize toxic dump protest.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Helped communities block more than 400 waste sites in three years; mailed untold tons of Styrofoam to McDonald's, convincing it to pledge $100 million toward recycling.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:



FINANCIAL PICTURE: A bare-bones operation with a poor, rural membership, CCHW relies on foundations and, uniquely, churches.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: Southern Louisianans Against Pollution, a CCHW group, is being funded by an incinerator trade association attempting to close down its competition.

MASCOT: Ed Begley, Jr.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 5
Bombthrowers

WE'D GIVE THEM: $35

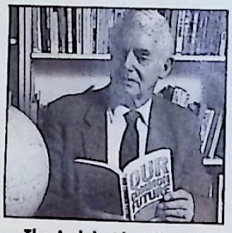
RENEE LYNN/PHOTO RESEARCHERS

EARTH ISLAND INSTITUTE

Founded: 1982. Members: 32,000 (18th overall).
Staff: 16. Budget: $1.1 million (20th overall).
Annual membership: $25. 300 Broadway, Suite 28, San Francisco, CA 94133; 415-788-3666.

PROFILE: Small, radical, and loosely organized, Earth Island Institute serves as the Distant Early Warning System for the mainstream environmental community. Risen from the ashes of Friends of the Earth in San Francisco, EI is basically a clearinghouse for a couple dozen small projects on things like Pacific forests, sea turtles, dolphins, exchanges with Japanese and Soviet Greens, even environmentally oriented music videos. Like its guru, David Brower, EI has a talent for innovation: It started Rainforest Action Network and smuggled a cameraman aboard a tuna boat in 1987 to record dolphin genocide for the first time.

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Graying pit-bull and Chairman of the Board David Brower, now 78 and heading his third group, mostly travels and talks, leaving the day-to-day operations to executive directors Dave Philips and John Knox. (Salaries: Brower, none; Philips, $17,227; Knox, $18,794.)

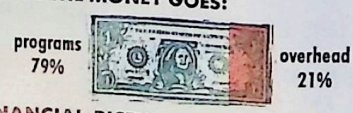


The Archdruid, still at it

TYPICAL MEMBER: Armchair Sandinista who votes for write-in candidates from the Green Party.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Ran public service announcement targeting H. J. Heinz that generated 5,000 telegrams; won lawsuit requiring federal observers aboard Pacific tuna boats.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:



FINANCIAL PICTURE: Equally dependent on members and foundations, Earth Island is one of the few small groups that adequately covers its projects' overhead and fund-raising.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: EI's management can be messy—a Brower trademark. "They spend more time in meetings than anyone ought to," says one Bay Area activist.

MASCOT: Jackson Browne.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 4
Hardliners

WE'D GIVE THEM: $25

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Founded: 1970. Members: 20,000 (20th overall).
Staff: 23. Budget: $1.2 million (19th overall).
Annual membership: $20. 1525 New Hampshire Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20036; 202-745-4870.

PROFILE: One of the few radical voices on Capitol Hill, EA tries to pick up small issues neglected by bigger groups, like Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUSTs) and utilities regulation. It also targets a "dirty dozen" of ecocidal congressmen for de-election (batted two for 12 last election) and gives good guys PAC contributions. EA was one of the first groups to expose problems with so-called degradable plastics, though Greenpeace later stole the show. EA eschews costly fund-raising techniques like direct mail; perhaps as a result, membership is stagnating. Though its staff of true believers swallows pay cuts, turnover is high, and work sometimes bogs down. "Nothing ever happened on some projects," says one ex-staffer. Donors have a choice of regular Environmental Action (not tax deductible) or the Environmental Action Foundation (tax deductible).

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Executive Director Ruth Caplan, 50, a veteran activist who by some accounts is abrasive, domineering, and somewhat dull. Staffers she dislikes don't last long. (Salary, $34,000.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Met mate at the *real* Earth Day (whose organizers founded EA).

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Convinced gypsy-moth sprayers in Virginia and West Virginia to substitute a naturally occurring bacterial insecticide for toxic pesticides.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

FINANCIAL PICTURE: Without direct mail, EA isn't growing much, but they prefer to stay small. Loyal membership, a handful of five-figure donors, and the occasional corporate sponsor chip in.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: EA's gypsy moth insecticide effort is bankrolled by Abbott Laboratories, maker of the bacterial insecticide that EA is trying to convince sprayers to use.

Pete the protester

MASCOT: Pete Seeger.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 4
Hardliners

WE'D GIVE THEM: $20

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

Founded: 1969. Members: 30,000 (17th overall).
Staff: 40. Budget: $3.1 million (15th overall).
Annual membership: $25. 218 D St. SE, Washington, DC 20003; 202-544-2600.

PROFILE: The classic example of a promising organization felled by messy management and internal squabbling. David Brower founded the multinational group in 1969 after his acrimonious ouster from the Sierra Club. Early work on nukes, strip mining, and the Alaska pipeline (on which Friends of the Earth was characteristically the most radical group) gave way to ten years of squabbling over whether to move from San Francisco to Washington and become more political. FOE and Brower split in 1985, and the group came east. Today, FOE's agenda is unclear, membership is dropping, and not a single staffer remains from the San Francisco days. In the latest restructuring attempt, FOE's essentially bankrupt shell is merging with the Environmental Policy Institute and the Oceanic Society. Each group has something to offer—OS is big on oil spills, EPI knows groundwater, and FOE has the big name—but none has its head above water financially.

WHO'S IN CHARGE: President and beltway veteran Michael Clark, 44, formerly of the Environmental Policy Institute. Not surprisingly, most of his time is spent fund-raising. (Salary, $50,000.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: A West Coast professional who wears Birkenstocks and thinks the Sierra Club sold out.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Won lawsuit stopping the government from overriding strict state laws on hazardous waste.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

FINANCIAL PICTURE: Overshooting membership predictions after Watt, FOE entered a fiscal shambles from which it's still digging out.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: Contributors of more than $5,000 provided 92 percent of EPI's $1.9 million in support during 1988. The organization, which has the largest budget of the three groups that make up FOE, refuses to identify its sugar daddies.

MASCOT: The California condor.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 4
Hardliners

WE'D GIVE THEM: $20

COURTESY OF EARTH ISLAND INSTITUTE

RICK FRIEDMAN/BLACK STAR

LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS

Founded: 1970. Members: 55,000 (16th overall). Staff: 70. Budget: $1.4 million (18th overall). Annual membership: $20. 1150 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 201, Washington, DC 20036; 202-785-8683.

PROFILE: Formed by major environmental groups as their political arm, the League of Conservation Voters hands out PAC money, endorses candidates, supplies campaign workers, holds press conferences for candidates, and grades members of Congress. Its endorsement is increasingly coveted, but since it doesn't work much with budding green pols at the state level, LCV is often forced to back the lesser of two evil federal candidates. Controlled by major enviro-leaders and thus more an umbrella than an environmental group in its own right, LCV was near financial death in 1987. It was rescued by new management, but at a price: All but three field offices—two in New Hampshire and one in Rhode Island—closed.

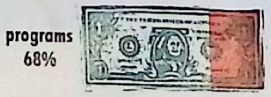
WHO'S IN CHARGE: Executive Director Jim Maddy, 42, runs operations, but a board of environmental leaders from mainline and state groups sets policy. (Salary, $75,000.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Stays up until 3 A.M. every election night.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Helped to rescue endangered incumbent Senators Frank Lautenberg (D-New Jersey) and David Durenberger (R-Minnesota) and to elect Senator Robert Kerrey (D-Nebraska).

Durenberger

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:



FINANCIAL PICTURE: Still digging out of its fiscal mess, but manages to spread a little money to candidates. Unfortunately, other environmental groups can't donate to LCV because it's a PAC.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: LCV's direct-mail appeals raised $308,800 hyping the League as the green movement's PAC—but because of past financial woes, LCV only donated an anemic $61,589 to candidates' coffers in 1988.

MASCOT: Robert Redford.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 3
Moderately worked up

WE'D GIVE THEM: $10

NATIONAL TOXICS CAMPAIGN

Founded: 1984. Members: 100,000 (13th overall). Staff: 25. Budget: $1.5 million (16th overall). Annual membership: $15. 1168 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA 02134; 617-232-0327.

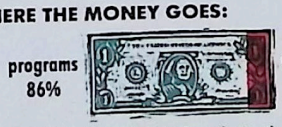
PROFILE: A big, angry network of 1,300 dumpsite and community groups that mixes protests with brainy policy and legislative work. Founded by retired campus radicals, National Toxics Campaign cut its teeth on the Superfund reauthorization fights of the mid-1980s and now specializes in forcing companies to sign "good neighbor" agreements promising not to poison. If they refuse or slip up, NTC's squad of chemists has been known to zip around fouled waterways in a Zodiac, collecting effluvia as evidence for prosecution. NTC is not a typical Not-In-My-Backyarder, either. Its technical and policy skills distinguish it from archrival Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Wastes, though some complain that NTC's grass-roots work is the group's secondary concern. NTC has a separate, tax-deductible fund that supports everything but lobbying and voter education.

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Executive Director John O'Connor, 35, who founded NTC with a group of Clark University buddies, heads a leadership that is close-knit and somewhat cliquish. (Salary, $30,000.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Has a master's degree and a second cousin who lives next door to American Cyanamid.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Forced Conoco to pay $23 million to 400 families whose homes were Love Canaled by its refinery in Ponca City, Oklahoma, last April; persuaded five supermarket chains to disclose pesticides used on produce and to gradually phase out the chemicals.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:



FINANCIAL PICTURE: Barely in the black. Field offices do their own fund-raising, but Boston headquarters usually has to make up the deficits.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: The ugly rift between NTC and Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Wastes started over competition to appear in a film on drinking-water hazards—promoted by a water filter company.

MASCOT: Jesse Jackson.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 4
Hardliners

WE'D GIVE THEM: $30

RAINFOREST ACTION NETWORK

Founded: 1985. Members: 30,000 (19th overall). Staff: Eight. Budget: $876,000 (21st overall). Annual membership: $15. 301 Broadway, Suite A, San Francisco, CA 94133; 415-398-4404.

PROFILE: A rainforest popularizer and pressure group that despite its small size is remarkably vocal. And earnest. "Reach inward to your soul," Director Randy Hayes urges the faithful. "Be bold. Be strong. You are an ecological warrior." Most of Rainforest Action Network's work is stateside. It badgers companies and banks with boycotts and letters, supports indigenous peoples, and pushes a ban on imports of tropical hardwood, an issue on which RAN is more strident than the Rainforest Alliance. RAN aggressively recruits new believers at college campuses and Grateful Dead concerts, but now that deforestation has become a household word the group needs to come up with more substantial projects.

Looking for new fires to put out

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Randy Hayes, 40, former Earth Firstler, filmmaker, and Visa card spokesman who conceived RAN after no established group would hire him. (Salary, $28,000.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: A recent college graduate who is now embarking on a career as an ecological warrior.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Paid $30,000 for rainforest ads in the *New York Times*; currently campaigning to stop geothermal development in Hawaii's Wao Kele O Puna rainforest.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

FINANCIAL PICTURE: RAN's budget will top $1 million next year, a long way from the $12,500 seed grant it got from Earth Island in 1986.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: RAN's early Burger King boycott was rife with Yankee moralizing, angering many Central American environmentalists.

MASCOT: Jerry Garcia.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 4
Hardliners

WE'D GIVE THEM: $25

RAINFOREST ALLIANCE

Founded: 1986. Membership: 18,000 (21st overall). Staff: Nine. Budget: $750,000 (22nd overall). Annual membership: $20. 270 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012; 212-941-1900.

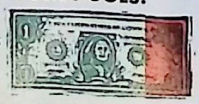
PROFILE: From its small office in New York's SoHo neighborhood, Rainforest Alliance mixes equal parts education, public relations, and rainforest chic. But what it does best is stir up opinion among influential academics and journalists—a reflection of the Alliance's roots as an information clearinghouse. Less polemical than its closest counterpart, Rainforest Action Network, the Alliance eschews boycotts in favor of deal-making. It has arranged marketing agreements with *Time* magazine and the Hermés fashion house, and last spring the Alliance came out against RAN's call for a ban on tropical timber imports, favoring regulation instead. Like RAN, the Alliance needs to develop concrete projects. Unlike RAN, its politics are sometimes timid.

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Executive Director Daniel R. Katz, 28, a relative newcomer to the environmental scene who can schmooze celebrities with the best of them. (Salary, $26,248.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Reads essayists like Lewis Thomas and plans to visit a real rainforest, *next* year.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Opened news bureau in Costa Rica last year; signed a $100,000 deal with Hermés of Paris to market silk scarves with rainforest motifs; organized a $350,000 radiothon to benefit Costa Rica's Monteverde Cloud Forest Preserve.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:



FINANCIAL PICTURE: Contributions are growing so fast that each year's budget is obsolete by April. The licensing deals bring in extra cash.

The mod one

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: The Alliance won't lay a glove on the World Bank, perhaps the greatest global rainforest villain.

MASCOTS: David Byrne, Thomas Lovejoy.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 2
Compromisers

WE'D GIVE THEM: $20

SEA SHEPHERD CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Founded: 1977. Members: 15,000 (22nd overall). Staff: 17 (all volunteer). Budget: $498,650 (24th overall). Annual membership: any amount. Box 7000-S, Redondo Beach, CA 90277; 213-373-6979.

PROFILE: Tiny, devoted, and extreme enough to make Earth First! look like Ranger Rick, this band of unpaid volunteers roams the seas in the 200-foot *Sea Shepherd II*, robbing whalers and seal hunters of their ill-gotten bounty, playing chicken with Soviet destroyers, and not leaving any evidence—crew members scuttled the *Sea Shepherd I* after it was captured by Portuguese police. Founded by disaffected Greenpeacer Paul Watson, the Society originally sought to stop illegal whaling. Today the Shepherds are more into smaller marine mammals, but unlike Greenpeace they're committed to direct action, and unlike Earth First! they operate in the open. Brushes with the law (and worse) are common, but the group says nobody has been seriously injured in connection with an action. Not yet, anyway.

Watson, out on the edge

WHO'S IN CHARGE: Founder Paul Watson, 39, who was ejected from Greenpeace (which he also helped found) for swiping a seal hunter's club. He drives the boat. (No salary.)

TYPICAL MEMBER: Is purposefully vague when discussing large segments of his or her past.

WHAT THEY'VE DONE LATELY: Since sinking half of Iceland's whaling fleet in 1986, the Sheps have mellowed out a little. Last year they obtained one of only two existing chunks of footage of dolphin slaughter in tuna nets.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

FINANCIAL PICTURE: Testing the direct-mail waters; the Sheps also tap into a few rich fans.

WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU: Until two years ago, crew members paid more than $1,500 per voyage for the privilege of risking their lives.

MASCOT: Mike Farrell.

MILQUETOAST/BOMBTHROWER INDEX: 5
Bombthrowers

WE'D GIVE THEM: $20

THE HONOR ROLL

They're homegrown, they're low-budget, and they may be the future of the environmental movement

ALLIANCE FOR THE WILD ROCKIES

A coalition of local green groups and business owners working to protect 15 million acres of undesignated land in Montana, Idaho, eastern Washington, and Wyoming. 415 N. Higgins Ave., Missoula, MT 59802; 406-721-5420.

CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Old-line scientists and attorneys who keep close watch on a crucial East Coast watershed. 162 Prince George St., Annapolis, MD 21401; 301-268-8816.

OREGON NATURAL RESOURCES COUNCIL

A strident coalition of old-growth preservationists that organizes protests, files suits, and occasionally receives threats from angry loggers. Yeon Building, Suite 1050, 522 S.W. Fifth Ave., Portland, OR 97204; 503-223-9001.

SILICON VALLEY TOXICS COALITION

Californians who keep high-tech electronics firms in check by monitoring groundwater cleanups, hazardous waste storage, and toxic gas emissions. 760 N. First St., San Jose, CA 95112; 408-287-6707.

SOCIETY FOR ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

A cerebral group of foresters, naturalists, and engineers who experiment with rebuilding—instead of just preserving—entire ecosystems. 1207 Seminole Highway, Madison, WI 53711; 608-262-9547.

SOUTHEAST ALASKA CONSERVATION COUNCIL

An unlikely team of natives, fishermen, and lobbyists that, more than any of the mainline groups, is steadily persuading Congress to protect what's left of Tongass National Forest. Box 021692, Juneau, AK 99802; 907-586-6942.

SOUTHERN UTAH WILDERNESS ALLIANCE

A watchdog group that organizes letter-writing campaigns, files suits, and badgers the local Bureau of Land Management offices to protect two million acres of undesignated Utah wilderness. Box 518, Cedar City, UT 84721; 801-586-8242.

TRUSTEES FOR ALASKA

An overworked three-lawyer firm that is spearheading local suits against Exxon. 725 Christensen Drive, Suite 4, Anchorage, AK 99501; 907-276-4244.